



Regional Service Council Minutes Region 8

Meeting Date: August 31, 2007

Meeting Location: Vigo County DCS
30 N. 8th Street
Terre Haute, IN 47803

Council Members Present: David Uberto, Regional Manager, Region 8; Mike Baker, Vigo County DCS Supervisor; Diana Thomson, Clay County FCM; Pamela Connelly, Vigo County Director; Katie Edington, Vermillion/Parke County Director; Nikki Fuhrmeister, CASA, Vigo County

Council Members Absent: Hon. Paulette Stagg, Vigo County; James/Linda Scarbrough, Vigo County Foster Parent; Hon. P. J. Pierson, Sullivan; Hon. Bruce Stengel, Vermillion; Hon. Sam Swaim, Parke; Hon. Joseph Trout, Clay.

Others in Attendance: Nyala Bolen, Friends of Families, Inc.; Peggy Weber, ISU; Suzy Cole, Vigo County DCS Supervisor; Sheila Priester, Vigo Terre Haute Youth Intervention Center; Emily Owens, Vigo County Wraparound; Sandy Walldridge, Friends of Families, Inc.; Jennifer Todd, ISU Department of Social Work; Jody Horstman, Hamilton Center; Brenda Thomas, SIRYV Aftercare Program.

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Called to Order at: 9:00 A.M.

Dave Uberto welcomed attendees and led the introductions. Minutes were read from the June meeting. The minutes were approved as read. Agenda items were discussed as follows:

1. County Director Updates

Dave introduced Pam Connelly as the new Vigo County Director as of August 6, 2007. She is still helping with Clay/Sullivan on a limited basis. The Clay/Sullivan Director position is currently posted on the job bank.

2. Region 8 Strategic Plan Update

The Strategic Plan is still at the Central Office level. Dave will share information as it comes in.

3. Practice Reform Rollout Update

DCS Supervisors and Management attended four (4) days of training in Vincennes; the training was excellent. The training was on what direction DCS is going and how we are going to get there. This not really a new concept, this is why social workers got into this line of work so they can do hands on work with children and families. The response and reactions have been encouraging from the Region 8 supervisors.

Family Case Managers will attend training at the Vigo County Library from September 17 thru September 20. Dave will attend the first day of rollout and encourages the Directors and Supervisor to show their support by attending sometime during this training.

This is a multiple phase rollout. The first phase is to build the team – involve the family and give them a sense of control to build an action plan. Pam shared a success story about Vigo County doing this and it was very productive and pleasant. When the family first went into the team meeting they had a 25% chance of it working and it did. The FCM set the rules and communication between everyone went well.

4. Office Space Discussion

Statewide the major question is – Will DFR/DCS split or remain together? At this point it appears that we will split, but that is subject to change. Jeff Lozer is the DCS Coordinator and is working with Venture Real Estate, Inc. Decisions need to be made to find existing space and modify the space, or in some cases we will need to build. Jeff has met with Clay, Parke, Vermillion and Vigo County. He has to meet with Sullivan County in the future. Parke and Vermillion may build due to no suitable sites available in their area. Dave will have more information forthcoming after the first of the year.

5. County Budget Updates

Katie:

Parke County is all done and the budget is not increasing much this year. Katie will be meeting with the judge about delinquents and the ordering of parents to reimburse.

Vermillion County budget hearing is set for September 23. They have had a huge increase in abuse and neglect. February and March 2007 exploded with investigations. They are running out of IV-B money. They will be getting more caseworkers. Vermillion County is holding the line on the budget.

Pam:

Vigo County is a whole new ballgame. The State helped last year with the Vigo County Council. We have a small budget, and then have to borrow money to get us through. We don't want to get loans anymore. The budget is up, but the levy is down. Our spending may go up for awhile with practice reform and then go down. We hope to level out. The county council president is Mr. Derrick Scott. We will meet with the budget committee on Tuesday, September 4 with Mr. Bird, Mr. Morris and Ms. Miller.

6. Community Partners Update

Nyala reported they are now serving 98 families: 59 –Vigo, 25 –Clay, 3 –Vermillion, 4 – Parke, and 5 –Sullivan.

July – 180 hours direct service with 60 hours open active.

She presented a proposal for Booker T. Washington Community Center with no cost and a projected November date.

Nyala shared 2 success stories: The first was a married couple referred by Vigo DCS. All their goals were met in four months. They were able to get into a house on June 15. The wife was able to enroll in Ivy Tech. The second success story is from Vermillion County. The parents were in prison. The kids living with dad worked out. They were taught parenting skills for their teenagers.

Problems – Cases have to be closed through DCS before they can go in and work the case. They can not go in as Community Partners until after cases are closed.

Early Intervention – Nyala will set up a small group discussion in a couple of weeks to work on a solution.

7. IV-B Coordinator Update

Penny gave handouts to the Directors and Mr. Uberto on the balance of contracts. This information was discussed. If a director is over two counties, then they can share the money between the counties. January 2008 – December 2008 is the completion of the current contract.

Independent Living – Plenty of funds available. A child must be 16 – 18 years old.
Voluntary Service 12 – 21 years old. Can the age be moved back to 14 or 15? No

Independent Living Specialist, Jeannie Darden from Central Office, will be visiting local offices. She will meet with the Region 8 management team on October 1, 2007.

When a child moves from county to county – don't worry – plenty of funds.

FYI – Not for sure, RFP – Accreditation process with providers is being set up so smaller proposals will be in the future that will consist of four to five pages. Hopefully this will not be as strenuous as in the past.

Dave said communications is critical. Monies are available, so just make that phone call.

8. Region 8 Conference Update

The conference is set for Wednesday, November 7, 2007 with Dr. Laskey presenting an Overview on Physical and Sexual Abuse and Understanding the Component in the Investigation of Child Fatalities. She is a major advocate and a dynamic speaker with a wealth of information. This is a free conference held at the Landsbaum Center. Peggy Weber is working on CEU and Tammy Young is working on "Save the Date" cards and supplies. We hope to deliver them in the next 10 days. Call Tammy at 244-2002 if you need cards. There have only been positive feedback about past conferences and no complaints about the workshops as of yet.

9. Additional Business

Peggy reported ISU has three interns in DCS this school year. There is one each in Vigo, Greene, and Clay. They have interns at other agencies and she thanked everyone and appreciates their support.

Nyala has five adopted families. She has a list of adoption resources if anyone would like the information.

SNAP Coordinator, Denise Halbert (North Hamilton) has adoption support group. They advertise in the newspaper. They are notified there are adoption funds if they come through our agency. A question was asked if there is support for guardianships. Is there anything available?

Foster Care Training has been expanded to Kinship Training in order to work with relatives.

Dan Kern reported that August 31, 2007 is the last official day for the Terre Haute Youth Intervention Center to be open. He thanked everyone for all the help and assistance. Additional services are available through Indianapolis.

There will be a community alternative to CPRTS coming soon as well as the training dates. They will provide respite. This is for kids on Medicaid in Region 8. DCS is participating.

Brenda Thomas, SIRYV has information for the directors for anyone that would like to meet with her.

Katie is on the Healthy Families Advisory Board and they meet two times a year. There is concern on safety of small children under 5 and SIDS. Pamphlets were passed out.

There will not be a meeting in November. We will be having meetings on September 28, October 26, and December 28, 2007.

Next Meeting Date, Location and Time: The next meeting will be held on Friday, September 28, 2007 at 9:00 A.M. in the second floor conference room.

Meeting adjourned at 10:40 A.M.